



# Educator Training

## *The Environmental Education and Training Partnership*

### *Introduction*

In September 2000, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) awarded a three year cooperative agreement to a consortia of universities and nonprofit organizations led by the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. This agreement continues the highly successful Environmental Education and Training Partnership (EETAP) which delivers training and support services to education professionals across the country. EETAP is committed to delivering high quality environmental education training that is scientifically and educationally sound and represents diverse perspectives on how to address environmental issues. This program is mandated under section 5 of the National Environmental Education Act of 1990.



Since 1992, EPA has awarded three cooperative agreements to operate this program. The first agreement provided \$5.4 million to the University of Michigan to operate the National Consortium for Environmental Education and Training (NCEET) from 1993-1995. The second agreement provided nearly \$9 million to the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) to operate the Environmental Education and Training Partnership (EETAP) from 1995-2000. The third agreement is expected to provide over \$5 million to the University of Wisconsin-led EETAP consortia to operate the program from October 2000 - September 2003. The program may be extended through September 2005. Each phase of the program has laid important groundwork for the next and has made significant contributions to the field of environmental education.

### *Advancing the Field of Environmental Education*

As this program has evolved over the years, it has provided leadership in advancing the field of environmental education (EE) by identifying key issues and designing training and support services that address those issues. Some key issues include a fragmented EE field; limited success in incorporating EE into mainstream education and environmental decision-making; challenges in reaching people of color communities; and insufficient resources. Strategies that have emerged to address these issues include:

- **Capacity building** — developing leaders and strengthening the capacity of organizations at the state level
- **Education reform** — linking EE with state and local education reform goals for academic achievement
- **Quality** — promoting quality EE that is scientifically and educationally sound and represents diverse perspectives
- **Diversity** — reaching a wide range of educators and diverse communities
- **Technology** — using the latest Internet technologies to improve access to EE information and resources and facilitate communication
- **Synergy** — strengthening partnerships to leverage resources and reduce duplication of effort

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## ***Providing Leadership and Delivering Training with the New Environmental Education and Training Partnership (2000 - 2005)***

The new EETAP consortium led by the University of Wisconsin builds on the strengths and challenges of its predecessors, especially the NAAEE-led EETAP program. The new program is comprised of “managing” and “cooperating” partners with overall leadership and management provided by the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point.

### **Managing Partners and Programmatic Responsibilities**

Five managing partners are responsible for delivering and coordinating training and support services in the following programmatic areas:

State capacity building – led by the National Environmental Education Advancement Project at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

Education reform – led by Northern Illinois University

Professional development – led by Project Learning Tree

Diverse audiences – led by the Greater Washington Urban League

Internet communication and access – led by NAAEE

### **Cooperating Partners**

Cooperating partners are responsible for working with the managing partners to deliver training and support services. These partners include:

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development  
Council for EE/Project WILD

Groundwater Foundation

National Project Water Education for Teachers

Ohio State University

Project del Rio

WestEd (a U.S. Department of Education Research Laboratory)

World Wildlife Fund

EETAP training and support services include:

- assisting states in achieving sustainable EE programs
- strengthening state EE associations
- working with national education associations to better integrate EE into mainstream education
- promoting the EE guidelines to ensure quality materials and programs

- delivering training to thousands of educators through established training networks
- involving educators who serve people of color communities
- using Internet technologies to ensure quality EE materials and information are widely available

## ***Building on the Challenges and Successes of the Past***

The new EETAP program builds on the challenges and successes of its predecessors. The following describes how NCEET and the first EETAP program laid important groundwork and developed a compelling framework that guide the future of this national training effort.

### **The University of Michigan Laid Important Groundwork with NCEET**

From 1993-1995, the University of Michigan-led consortia, NCEET, conducted various needs assessments to determine what type of training program was needed. This included a national survey of in-service EE teacher education programs. This also included the development of an environmental literacy framework for assessing the needs of middle and high schools and pre-service and practicing teachers. This framework was developed in conjunction with the Florida Institute of Technology Melbourne, Southern Illinois University-Carbondale, University of Tennessee-Knoxville, and University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point.

An “EE Toolbox” of resource materials was developed for teachers and trainers on topics such as how to design effective workshops, approach environmental issues in the classroom, integrate EE into the school curriculum, reach urban audiences, and use community resources and computers in the classroom. And, the Internet site “EE-Link” was developed to increase access to EE information and resource materials. “EE-Link” has become a state-of-the-art Internet site which links to thousands of resources and sites across the country and around the world. “EE-Link” is now a project of NAAEE and a part of both the first and second EETAP programs.

### **The North American Association for Environmental Education Provided National Leadership with EETAP**

From 1995-2000, led by NAAEE, EETAP designed and implemented a training program that successfully identified and made considerable progress in addressing key issues facing the field of EE. Faced with fragmentation of programs across the country, EETAP formed a consortium of 11 universities and organizations to coordinate their delivery of EE training programs and services. EETAP also implemented a national capacity building strategy to help organizations at the state level develop their own strategies for coordinating and institutionalizing EE across their states.

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### NCEET Products:

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**“EE Toolbox”** — Resource materials for teachers and trainers. Access a brochure describing the “Toolbox” on the World Wide Web at <http://www.epa.gov/enviroed/pdf/toolbox/pdf>. Obtain copies by contacting Kendall-Hunt Publishing at 1-800-228-0810.

**“EE-Link”** — Internet site containing EE information and resources. EE-Link is now a project of NAAEE. Visit them on the World Wide Web at <http://www.eelink.net>

With the lack of attention to EE in public schools, EETAP developed training workshops that demonstrated how EE can be used to advance education reform goals. EETAP also developed EE guidelines for materials, learners, and educators that incorporate education reform themes and are correlated to national education standards.

To increase outreach to people of color communities, EETAP developed a program to offer EE training to urban community leaders and recruited two new partners who have traditionally served the African American and Hispanic communities. And, as the Internet increasingly became the technology of the future, EETAP strengthened the existing EE-Link Internet site ([www.eelink.net](http://www.eelink.net)) and developed new technologies on EdGateway ([www.edgateway.net](http://www.edgateway.net)) to foster communication and networking among educators.

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### EETAP Key Accomplishments:

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- Formed a national consortium to deliver training to over 75,000 educators nationwide
- Provided resource materials and other support to tens of thousands of additional educators at conferences and through the Internet
- Hosted groundbreaking leadership clinics to assist states in developing strategies for implementing effective statewide programs
- Published EE guidelines for materials, learners, and educators which promote scientifically and educationally sound EE
- Published research, evaluation tools, and other materials to assist in understanding and meeting the needs of educators
- Made progress in reaching people of color organizations and communities
- Developed state-of-the art Internet technologies through EE-Link and EdGateway



*For additional information,*  
visit EETAP on the World Wide Web at  
<http://www.eetap.org>



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